

We claim:

1. A method for delivering a non-multimedia message to a multimedia messaging service, MMS, enabled handset comprising the steps of:

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receiving and storing the non-multimedia message at a message server in a mailbox assigned to a recipient of the non-multimedia message;

determining if the recipient utilizes an MMS enabled handset;

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if the recipient utilizes an MMS enabled handset, causing a short messaging service, SMS, notification message to be generated and transmitted to the recipient's handset, the notification message communicating to the recipient that a message is awaiting delivery to the recipient;

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upon receipt of a deliver message originated by the recipient's handset at the message server, transmitting the information contained in the non-multimedia message to the recipient utilizing a communication mode supported by the MMS enabled handset of the recipient.

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2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the non-multimedia message is a conventional voicemail message and wherein the method comprises further steps of storing at the message server the conventional voicemail message as data utilizing a first digital format and translating the voicemail message from the first digital format into another format compatible with the communication mode supported by the MMS enabled handset of the recipient.

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3. The method according to claim 1 wherein the step of receiving includes receiving the non-multimedia message from a source that does not support MMS.

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4. A message server that supports the delivery a non-multimedia message to a multimedia messaging service, MMS, enabled handset, the message server including means for receiving and storing the non-multimedia message in a mailbox assigned to a recipient of the non-multimedia message, the message server characterized by:

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means for determining if the recipient utilizes an MMS enabled handset;

means for causing a short messaging service, SMS, notification message to be generated and transmitted to the recipient's handset if the recipient utilizes an MMS enabled handset, the notification message communicating to the recipient that a message is awaiting delivery to the recipient;

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means for transmitting the information contained in the non-multimedia message to the recipient utilizing a communication mode supported by the MMS enabled handset of the recipient upon receipt of a deliver message originated by the recipient's handset.

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5. The message server according to claim 4 wherein the non-multimedia message is a conventional voicemail message and wherein the message server comprises means for storing the conventional voicemail message as data utilizing a first digital format and translating the voicemail message from the first digital format into another format compatible with the communication mode supported by the MMS enabled handset of the recipient.

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6. The message server according to claim 4 wherein the means for receiving includes means for receiving the non-multimedia message from a source that does not support MMS.

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7. A method for delivering at least a portion of a multimedia message originated by a multimedia messaging service, MMS, enabled handset to a non-MMS enabled handset comprising the steps of:

5 receiving and storing the multimedia message at a message server in a mailbox assigned to a recipient of the multimedia message;

determining if the recipient utilizes a handset that can receive short message service, SMS, messages;

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if the recipient utilizes an SMS enabled handset, causing an SMS notification message to be generated and transmitted to the recipient's handset, the notification message communicating to the recipient that a message is awaiting delivery to the recipient;

15 upon receipt of a call from the recipient at the message server seeking access to the multimedia message awaiting delivery in the recipient's mailbox, transmitting at least a portion of the information contained in the multimedia message to the recipient utilizing a communication mode supported by the non-MMS enabled handset of the recipient.

20 8. The method according to claim 7 wherein the multimedia message contains at least a voice message portion and wherein the method comprises further steps of storing at the message server the voice message portion as data utilizing a first digital format and translating the voice message portion from the first digital format into another format compatible with the communication mode supported by the non-MMS enabled handset of the
25 recipient.

9. The method according to claim 7 wherein the multimedia message contains at least a first message portion and wherein the method comprises further steps of determining if the recipient's handset is capable of receiving the communication mode utilized by said first
30 message portion, and upon determining that the recipient's handset is not capable of receiving the communication mode, generating a notice message transmitted to the recipient's handset informing the recipient that a portion of the multimedia message could not be communicated to the recipient.

10. A message server that supports the delivery of at least a portion of a multimedia message originated by a multimedia messaging service, MMS, enabled handset to a non-MMS enabled handset, the message server including means for receiving and storing the multimedia message in a mailbox assigned to a recipient of the multimedia message, the message server characterized by:

means for determining if the recipient utilizes a handset that can receive short message service, SMS, messages;

means for causing an SMS notification message to be generated and transmitted to the recipient's handset if the recipient utilizes an SMS enabled handset, the notification message communicating to the recipient that a message is awaiting delivery to the recipient;

means for transmitting at least a portion of the information contained in the multimedia message to the recipient utilizing a communication mode supported by the non-MMS enabled handset of the recipient upon receipt of a call from the recipient seeking access to the multimedia message awaiting delivery in the recipient's mailbox.

11. The message server according to claim 10 wherein the multimedia message contains at least a voice message portion and wherein the message server comprises means for storing the voice message portion as data utilizing a first digital format and translating the voice message portion from the first digital format into another format compatible with the communication mode supported by the non-MMS enabled handset of the recipient.

12. The message server according to claim 10 wherein the multimedia message contains at least a first message portion and wherein the message server comprises means for determining if the recipient's handset is capable of receiving the communication mode utilized by said first message portion, and means for generating a notice message transmitted to the recipient's handset informing the recipient that a portion of the multimedia message could not be communicated to the recipient upon determining that the recipient's handset is not capable of receiving the communication mode.